

Ames Historical Society

AMES • IOWA

Newsletter to Members 2012 WINTER....ISSUE #1/4

The mission of the Ames Historical Society is to preserve local history and illuminate its stories.



*Please join us for the
Contract Burning Celebration,
Sat., March 3 following the Annual Meeting.*

Ames Historical Society Board:

President Peggy Baer
Vice-President Mary Atherly
Secretary Sharon Wirth
Treasurer Ken Cameron

Board Members:

Bob Bourne, Jan Breitman, Matthew Donovan, Carol Phillips, Mike Quinn, Meg Speer, Lynette Spicer, Rollie Struss, Willie Struss, Kathy Svec
The Board meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at City Hall at 6:45pm. Members welcome!

Administrator Alan Spohnheimer
Staff Carolyn Larson, Dennis Wendell
Margaret Vance

Facility Manager Vacant; seeking volunteer

Ames Historical Society is an incorporated, 501c3 not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting interest in local and state history through publications, programs, exhibitions and operation of an archive and historic site.

Headqtrs: 416 Douglas, Ames, IA 50010
Open Wed-Fri, 1-5pm
Mail: PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010
Phone: 515-232- 2148
E-mail: mail@ameshistoricalsociety.org
Website: www.AmesHistoricalSociety.org

The newsletter is published four times a year for A. H. S. members. Direct comments and questions to: Editor, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010 or e-mail above.

Hoggatt School is located on the grounds of Meeker School, near 18th and Burnett, Ames, Iowa. Open April 1 through October 31.

You've Done it! ...416 Douglas Is Paid For! Ames Gains Its First Building Dedicated to Local History Come Celebrate on Sat., March 3!

How The Building Purchase Came To Be

By Peggy Baer, Society President



It all started in January of 2004, when an anonymous donor challenged the Board of Directors to start a Building Fund. The purpose of the Fund was to support purchase of a building to serve as Ames Historical Society's permanent home. The donor offered a box of loose change (left) amounting to \$500+ if Board members would contribute at least \$500. Board members readily did so and the wheels were set in motion.

Then, in 2005, Mary Adams, Ames, passed away and gifted the contents of her home to the Society and her home in north Ames (right) and its five acres to the City of Ames. City Council decided to divide the property, with 3.2 acres merging with Ada Hayden Heritage Park. The remaining 1.8 acres with her home on it were to be sold and the net proceeds given to the Ames Historical Society Building Fund.



Meanwhile, the Society assembled a committee of community people to review buildings that could meet criteria established by the Board: downtown with off-street parking, a newer building with an elevator, and enough space to house exhibitions, storage, work space and visitor interaction. The site committee included Terry Adams, Mary Atherly, Peggy Baer, Bill Dreyer, Reiny Friedrich, Stuart Hinerfeld, Catherine Hunt, Dean Hunziker, Leo Lawlor, Jere Maddux, Rollie and Willie Struss, Kathy Svec, Ted Tedesco, Jerome Thompson, Dennis Wendell and Sharon Wirth.



The committee looked at a number of buildings including the Adams Funeral Home, the Elks Club, the 4-plex apartment across from the Library, the Lechner Building, the Mathison building, Roosevelt School, the IOOF building on Main Street and the Ascension Lutheran Church. The initial consideration favored the site of the 4-plex apartment – but then a very low-key “for sale” sign was spotted in the doorway of the office building at 416 Douglas (above).

The committee quickly determined that 416 Douglas best met the criteria. It was for sale by Red and Marilyn Stenberg for \$558,000. In addition, one of the downstairs suites was vacant. The Society decided to rent this suite in 2007, retaining the space we had been using at 108 5th Street for storage.

By the end of 2007 the Building Fund balance stood at \$88,000. The Society submitted an offer to purchase the building to the Stenbergs in April 2008.



Also in 2007, an Ames Historical Society Endowment Fund was established with the Story County Com-

munity Foundation. Donations are retained, invested and grown. The Society receives 5% of the Endowment balance annually to fund day-to-day operations. As the Endowment grows so will the annual yield.

In January 2008, a small group of Society members made a commitment to raise the funds to buy the building: Rollie and Willie Struss, Don Gustafson, Bob and Lois Vohs, Jack and Barb Adams, Nick Howell, Dennis Wendell, Kathy Svec and Peggy Baer. They were convinced that there was enough support among the membership and in the community to raise over half a million dollars to purchase the building – despite worsening economic conditions.

Willie and Rollie Struss were asked to co-chair the committee. Don Gustafson, retired from the ISU Foundation, served as a volunteer consultant. A casebook was prepared to describe the need for the fund-raising campaign called



“Legacy Ames”. Work began in February 2008 to meet the Dec. 31, 2008 deadline on the offer to purchase the building.



Members and friends who were asked to donate responded whole-heartedly! In late December 2008, a down payment of \$380,000 was made! The Society entered into a 3-year contract with the Stenbergs for the balance, with monthly payments at a very generous interest rate of 2% for the life of the contract. Though the building was ours on Dec. 31, 2008, we still needed almost \$200,000 to pay off the contract.

Throughout 2009, 2010 and 2011 donations to the Building Fund continued and two large payments amounting to \$55,000 were made to the Stenbergs.

In the interim, the City finalized many legal aspects of the house-and-land donation after Mary Adams’ death in 2005 and finally in 2011 the home and property were auctioned for \$145,000. Though the economic recession had negatively impacted home values, the Society still received net proceeds of \$64,991 in December 2011.

Added to the slightly more than \$75,700 accumulated in the Building Fund, this put the Society over the top in terms of needed dollars to pay off the contract.

The formal handing over of the final contract payment of \$107,000+ was on January 3, 2012 at the Stenberg’s home (below).



(L to R) Kathy Svec, Ken Cameron, Marilyn and Red Stenberg, Rollie Struss on “final payment” day.

We thank the Stenbergs for their patience and confidence in the Society’s ability to raise the money.

And, of course, we are **so grateful to ALL our Building Fund donors** for their support and their belief that Ames needs a permanent home for its unique history! It has been an incredible eight-year journey to arrive at this moment!

You’re Invited to the Contract Burning Party on Sat. March 3



To celebrate the historical milestone of the first permanent building for local history, the Society is throwing a party!

It will follow the Annual Meeting on Saturday March 3.

Attendees will be treated to a light lunch and refreshments.

The Annual Meeting will start at 10 am at the Ames Public Library auditorium. See next page for details. ➔

Immediately following the meeting, the contract burning ceremony will be on the sidewalk outside 416 Douglas.

Then, the Society’s headquarters at 416 Douglas, Suite 101 will be open for tours, exhibit browsing, lunch and celebratory cake. Visitors can view the recent expansion and remodeling of our space in Suite 101.

Please join us for this grand occasion!



Members Invited to the 2012 Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars now to attend:

Saturday, March 3, 10 am at the Ames Public Library Auditorium.

After short items of business, we're excited to have local media specialist, **Teresa Larson** present an overview and actual video clips from our Oral History Project: *Did You Know?* She'll highlight the large number of interviews that have been recorded and their diverse range of topics – a treasure-trove of local stories.

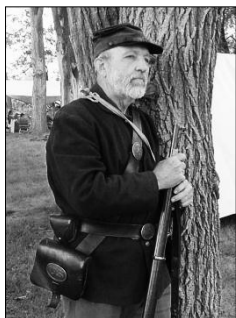
She'll also present the public premier of a Society-produced mini documentary "*Machinery of Change: The Tribune Press*" featuring the last run of the Tribune's printing press and interviews with the paper's staff. Curator Dennis Wendell will close with highlights of a new exhibit at 416 Douglas featuring items from the Bert and Mary Adams collection.

The Contract Burning Party will immediately follow the program at 416 Douglas.

2012 Ames Historical Society Lecture Series Continues

All lectures will be at Ames City Auditorium, 520 Sixth Street, Ames, Iowa.

A \$2 freewill donation is requested at the door to assist with auditorium rental.



Tuesday, February 28, 2012, 7pm

Iowa in the Civil War

by O.J. Fargo, Green Valley Education Agency (retired), Creston

During the sesquicentennial observance of the Civil War, we bring you O.J. Fargo's presentation that details Iowa's involvement from Ft. Sumter to the surrender at Appomattox. Although Fargo focuses on the everyday experiences of a soldier in the field, he also describes the situation on the home front and politics of the era. He'll bring the roster of Iowa soldiers who served, and interested researchers can look up those from Story County. Fargo has authored two books on Iowa history and a book on the everyday life of a Civil War soldier among many other publications. He is also president of an Iowa regiment of Civil War Re-enactors and will appear in uniform.



Tuesday, March 27, 2012, 7pm

Trains Across Iowa

by Rudolph Daniels, Chair of Railroad Operations Technology and Railroad History at Western Iowa Tech Community College, Sioux City

All aboard for an Iowa rail adventure! In a vintage conductor's uniform, Rudy Daniels paints a vivid picture of the past, present and future of the Hawkeye State's railroads. Learn about Iowa's unique position in the construction of the first transcontinental railroad and the state's great contribution to railroad safety. Daniels will also describe the famous streamliners that rode Iowa's rails. Dr. Daniels has written the official history of US railroads, *Trains Across the Continent*. This lecture is an introduction to the Society's exhibit, *Rail Reality: How the Trains Made Ames*, June-September 2012 at the Octagon Center for the Arts.



Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 7pm

From Small Town to the Big Top: the Leininger Sisters Join the Circus

by Zellettia Leininger Streit, moderated by Dennis Wendell

The circus is coming to town! Well, not exactly, but Zellettia Leininger, who performed along with her sister Medeia during the golden age of the big-tops, will talk about her fascinating life. Zee debuted at age three on the stage at Lake Comar, sang and danced as part of the "Leininger Show Troupe" and in the 1930s, appeared before circus audiences in central Iowa and nearby states. She trained as a toe tap dancer, vocalist, ventriloquist and acrobat and later performed on the trapeze and tight wire, rode elephants and did bareback riding. Leininger will share recollections and photos of her early years in Ames learning and teaching dance, entertaining in small circuses and finally touring with the Ringling Brothers.

The Lecture Series is open to the public.

Feb., & Mar. programs funded by Humanities Iowa, a private, non-profit state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and in part by a grant from the Iowa Dept. of Cultural Affairs' Community Cultural Grant program.

Volunteer Spotlight



Shannon Bardole started volunteering with AHS in May 2011.

She spent many hours on the online WWII project so it could be complete by Veteran's Day last year. Shannon is now working on

the Ames Mayor's project so it can be completed this summer. A picture and interesting information for each of the 40+ mayors of Ames will be framed and hung at City Hall.

Shannon received her BA degree in Family Services from University of Northern Iowa in 2002. She worked for about 5 years at Living History Farms as an intern in the Broom Shop and on the 1900 Farm doing historic dinners.

She moved to Ames in August 2006 and currently works as an administrative assistant at the United Way office. She enjoys history, wanted a way to be more connected to Ames history and to get more involved in the community.

When asked how she got hooked on local history, she said "My Mom dragged us kids to all the local history museums in Iowa when we were growing up." Shannon brings her terrific organizational and technology skills to projects at AHS. She is also one of several younger volunteers who bring a different perspective and new skills to the Society. Thank you Shannon, for your time and enthusiasm!

New Tenant at 416 Douglas

Since the last newsletter, a new tenant - National Alliance for Mentally Ill/Central Iowa (NAMI) - has rented space on the both the first and second floors of our building, occupying offices vacated last August by another renter.

The Society retained and remodeled a portion of the first floor, providing more exhibit area and enlarged staff and volunteer space as well as a presentation room for groups of up to 20 people.

We are pleased to have reliable renters. Until the time that we have the resources to occupy the whole building, our tenants provide needed cash-flow.

Challenge Grant Has Been Met!



HOORAY! We are excited to announce that the drive to meet the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs Challenge Grant is complete! This State of Iowa grant promised to provide \$10,000 for our Endowment if we raised \$30,000 new dollars. When all the 2011 end-of-the year donations were finally tallied, we discovered that we had reached our goal and gone \$3,192 past it! Added to donations contributed prior to the Challenge - this brings the Endowment total to \$70,605. When the annual distribution is received, it should be more than \$3,500 for day-to-day operations!

New Business Members!

The Society has extended its membership drive to local businesses and gratefully thanks the following new members for supporting local history:

- Accurate Auto Trim Audio & Accessories
- Ames Chamber of Commerce
- Ames Golf and Country Club
- First National Bank
- Henkel Construction Company
- Kiwanis Club of Ames
- Lawlor Farms, Inc.
- RDG Planning and Design

Help from Random Goods

Last summer, the 74-year-old Varsity Theater building at 2410 Lincoln Way became a unique resale and costume shop called "Random Goods". Owners are Cheryl and Tim Gleason, Ames. As they opened their shop, Cheryl said, "I want to offer charitable accounts to local non-profits. Donors would bring in items for consignment, telling us what non-profit group should get the proceeds from the sale."



The Gleasons have been true to that intention. The Society has taken them donated items intended for resale; Society members might consider that as another way to support the organization.

Mel in the Morning

On the first and third Mondays of each month on KASI radio (1430 AM) Mel Crippen hosts the Society on "Mel in the Morning." The interviews usually occur between 8:15 am and 8:30 am, and include a variety of topics. Listen in!

Headquarters Happenings @ 416 Douglas



3rd Graders: History is Cool!

On January 27, Curator Dennis Wendell and Administrators Alan Spohnheimer (above) and Carolyn Larson presented local history programs to three classes of third graders at Sawyer School. An interesting array of artifacts provided a basis for relating stories about life in earlier times. The children also received guided tours of City Hall and the police station. Before returning to their school, the entire group of 72 was given a slideshow illustrating the history of transportation in Ames. The young students were quite excited - very engaged by things they got to see and experience.

A thank-you note was received, signed by all the children. Their teacher had written: "Your program was perfect for 3rd grade students!"

Billy Sunday Materials



A package arrived in December that contained an 1885 Iowa Census Records Book that had been turned into a scrapbook of Billy Sunday articles dating to 1909. This was a very welcome addition to our Billy Sunday materials. For more about Billy Sunday, see our website.

Antique Ames Donates Cases

In early February, two large, lighted display cases donated by Carol Jacobs of Antique Ames were moved to 416 Douglas. They wouldn't fit through the doors and had to be disassembled then re-assembled in Suite 101! They will be used to showcase selected items in our collection. The total size is 12 feet wide by 7 feet high. Sadly, Antique Ames has closed.



Beta Sigs Volunteer



For more than a year, two loyal volunteers from ISU's Beta Sigma Psi fraternity have provided many hours performing mostly "heavy lifting" chores. They have cheerfully moved equipment and artifacts and assembled shelving.

Pictured are Jared Stumme and Isaac Hanson.

Questers Project Nearly Finished



The Iowa Questers organization makes grants available to local chapters – but requires members to put in volunteer hours to obtain the money. Ames chapters proposed and won a grant to make hard copies of significant 1948-58 images from the Tribune Photo Collection. Members of the Capt. Greeley and Neta Snook chapters have spent several hours each week since last summer labeling 3,885 images!

School Building Plans Archived



The Ames Community School District recently donated architectural plans for many of its buildings. This augments our collection of residential house plans and provides invaluable information about these important community structures. Alan Spohnheimer (L) and Margaret Vance show off the stack!

We Get Mail!

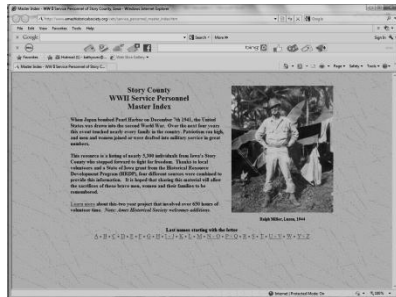
World War II Index Prompts Email

From: Wayne Messer

Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Subject: Thank You for the WW II Service Index

In searching through the World War II Service Personnel Index for an item for the Cambridge Historical Association website, I found records for an uncle of mine! I knew he had worked for the State before being in the Navy in Washington, DC; but, it had not occurred to me there would be anything in your files. There were several articles from the newspaper about him and his family. I have let a number of relatives know that this can be found on your website. Thank you for making this available. It has been very useful personally and for everyone interested in Story County history.



Request From Denmark

In January, an email arrived from Horst Fries in Denmark. He was looking for information about the children of James Fries, a family member born in Ames in 1922. Using resources available to our staff, we were able to locate and connect Horst with James's son living in Iowa – and to provide a link to information about James in our WW II index. Horst responded, "Thank you many times. In Denmark there lives just me and my three



brothers with the name Fries. In the US I have only found a single family for now. And I have searched for over 40 years!"

1920s Exhibit a Big Hit!

At the request of the Ames Chapter of the Des Moines Metro Opera Guild, the Society put together display boards featuring images of Ames in the 1920s. They were to compliment a 1920s-themed fundraiser. This note was received from organizers, Dilys Morris and Achilles Avraamides, "The display, *Ames Through the 1920s*, was a BIG hit at the ...fundraiser. Guests gathered round the displays looking at every picture and description. Thank you very much. We have enclosed a small donation."

Society News

ISU Museums Requests Image



In February, Allison Sheridan at University Museums, asked for permission to use an image from our collection. She said, "I am working on a wall-paper mural style timeline to be installed in the lower hallway of Morrill Hall

and am looking for a not-often-seen image of the "Dinkey" circa 1900s. I noticed a few images on the Ames Historical Society's Dinkey webpage and was wondering if the AHS had high-resolution images in a horizontal orientation? We would of course credit the AHS for the use of the image." We were pleased to provide what she needed and look forward to this large-scale installation at Morrill Hall!

Upcoming Train Exhibit

A special exhibition is planned this year about the impact of the railroad on the development of Ames.



"Rail Reality: How the Trains Made Ames," will run from June 1 to October 28 in all three galleries at the Octagon Center for the Arts, 417 Douglas, Ames.

The exhibit will include:

- a historical perspective in six key time periods
- a one-man show of pastel drawings by train artist Stewart Buck, formerly of Ames
- scale models of the "Dinkey" and the original Ames train yards south of Main Street

During the run of the exhibit, Gallery Talks will be presented each month that will provide in-depth information selected train subjects. Watch for a complete schedule in the next newsletter.

DVDs Available for Check-Out

When the Society acquired a video camera for recording oral histories, the decision was made to also record our lecture programs starting in 2011.

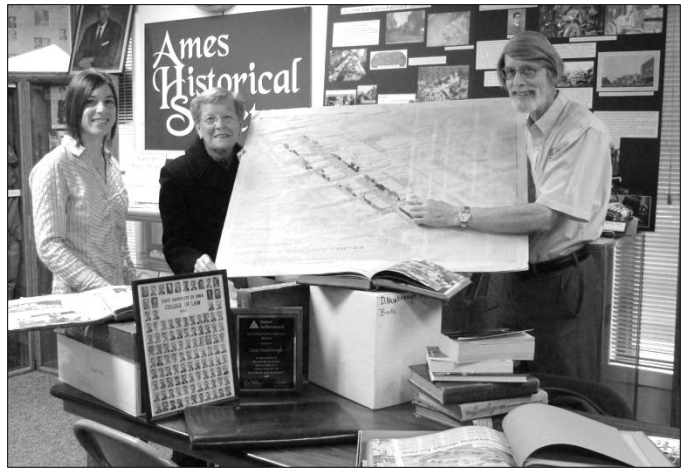
These DVDs are available from Society headquarters on a short-term, check-out basis. Programs include the Jack Trice Legend, Joe Gerbacht and Movie Theaters in Ames, Cold Cases (unsolved murders), the McFarland Clinic Story and WW II Home Fronts in Iowa. For more information, call 515-232-2148.

Curator's Report from Dennis Wendell

Collections Donors in 2011

The Society is grateful to the following 161 donors who provided important additions to our collection in 2011:

F. Terrill Adams, Jack Adams, AHS Alumni Assoc., Ames City Cable TV, Ames City Inspections, Ames Foundation, Ames Public Library, Tom Anderson, Anonymous, Chuck Benson, Roger & Kay Berger, Betty Blagen, Mary Jane Bogdanovich, Audrey Book, Book & Basket Club, Roy Boulware, Bob Bourne, Dick Brooks, Katharine P. Brown, Monty Brown, Pat Brown, Janet S. Bunker, Neil Calhoun, Raymond A. Callahan, Ken Cameron, Campus Baptist Church, Bev Canon, Mary Martin Carr, Carol G. Carson, Lenita Jordan Carstens, Lynn Christian, Tim Coble, Robert & Anita Cody, Collegiate Presb. Church, Joan Cooper, Kathy Coronos, Cynthia O. Duff Questers, Dane 207 Questers, Robert D. Deppe, Sharon Doty, James Dresser, Dee A. Dreeszen, M. Burton Drexler, Kenneth F. Dunker, Dorothy Dyer, Robert Egemo, Judy Ellis.



Donna Newbrough, wife of former Ames mayor, Don Newbrough, donated items from his term in office.

Amy & Michael Rowell, Charles Rutter, Sally Sawyer, Robert Schumer, Marlys Scott, Harris Seidel, Jack Shelley estate, Cynthia N. Shriver, Virginia Slater, Terry Smay, Bob & Pat Sparks, Alan Spohnheimer, Adam Starrett, Jared Stumme, Gary Sutton, Kathy Svec, Sue Taege, Andy Tang, Neal Tarman, Jean M. Thomas, Daryl Thomason, Trinity Christian Reformed Church, Margaret Vance, Roger Volker, Sara Vouthilak, Kay Wall, C.K. Walter, Steven Weinberg, Harry Weiss, Dennis Wendell, Don Whattoff, Pauline Williams, John Wilson, Geitel Winakor estate, Norma H. Wolff, Linda Woodworth, Hank Zaletel, Suzanne Zaffarano



Following the retirement of Bill (Jr.) and Genevieve Pyle from their long-time Main Street photography business, the family closed and sold the building.

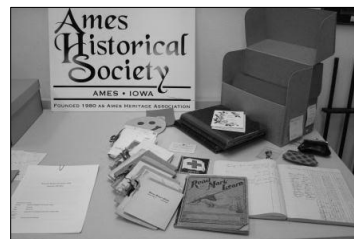
In the process, many wonderful items were brought to the Society, including an iconic antique large-format camera.

Kay Eschbach, Dorothy Ewing, Duane Finch, First Christian Church, Lori A. Fiscus, Bob Fitz, Fran Frazier, R.J. Gardner, Charlotte Cleavenger Gauger, Shellie Goecke, Roger Goetz, James Graham, Jean Guard, Barb Gwiasda, Bruce Hach, Gary Hall, Sally Haverly, Dee Hegstrom, Collin Hobert, Joyce Hornstein, Donna Howard, Dale Hughes, Gary Hunziker, ISU Library Special Collections, Judy James, Ron James, Carole Jensen, Kären Smedal John, Howard Johnson, Marie Johnson, Patricia L. Johnson, Susan (Wickersham) Johnson, Dennis Jones, Becky Jordan, Julie Jorstad, KHOI-FM, Owen J. Kalsem, Patrick Kavanagh, Hugo Kenemer, Clair Keller, George Kizer

Janet Klaas, Helen Koch, Dan Konrady, Warren B. Kuhn, Judy Rah Kunesch, Loren P. Larson, Wilma Lesan, Ronell Lindeman, Jerry Litzel, Diana S. Madsen, Richard Manatt, Susan Marrier, Pauline Martin, Eleanor Mathews, Lynn Matson, McFarland Clinic, Isabel D. McGuire, James Menzel, Morrie Mericle, Donald G. Miller, Thelma Miller, Charles Mischke, Kay Mitchell, Jurine Borton Moore, Donna L. Newbrough, Elizabeth Nygaard, James & Judirae Obrecht, Mary O'Donnell, Mary Owings, Pat Pearson, James Prior, Genevieve Pyle family, Harold Rake, Sherry Richards, Ian Ringgenberg.



Tanya Zanish Belcher (L), University Archivist, displays Book & Basket Club items to club members that have recently been



transferred from ISU to Ames Historical Society. Book & Basket was founded in 1897 and is a community organization that is still meeting. The Society was very pleased

to receive the records of this long-time group.

This collection enhances other records from similar organizations that show social traditions in Ames.



(L to R) Mayor Ann Campbell and Parks & Recreation Head, Nancy Carroll present a check to Peggy Baer, Ken Cameron and Rollie Struss – the proceeds from the sale of the Bert and Mary Adams home. This wonderful gift from the City of Ames allowed the Society to make the final payment on our building at 416 Douglas!

WATCH FOR the Ames Public Library's continuing series of programs on the Civil War, as well as the traveling Civil War exhibit trailer in April.

Is it time to renew your membership?

Renewals are due on the one-year anniversary of last year's payment. Check this newsletter's label for information about your membership. Memberships fund the day-to-day operations of the Society, allowing us to continue to be a valued community resource. We thank you!

Introductory - 1st year	\$10	Sustaining	\$100
Individual	\$25	Sustaining Plus	\$101-500
Family	\$40	Benefactor	\$500
Friend	\$50	Patron	\$1,000

Name _____

Address _____

Ames Historical Society. PO Box 821. Ames, IA 50010

Endowment Contribution

Future stability of the Society's daily operations depend on growing a strong Endowment. Let's build upon the success of the Challenge Grant!

Amount _____

Name _____

Address _____

**Mail to: Story County Community Foundation,
PO Box 1666, Ames, IA 50010**

Return Service Requested

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